



**Regional Assessment and
Recommendations for the
Statewide/Regional
Strategic Plan**

Prepared for the
**Alabama Association
of Regional Councils
and
Alabama Development Office**

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By

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Brief Description/Outline of Report and CD Contents

This report is for work that was conducted as part of the process of developing the Statewide/Regional Strategic Plan (SRSP) for the Alabama Association of Regional Councils (AARC). The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) is manager of the SRSP project but all 12 regional councils provide plan development support. The SRSP aims at facilitating the identification and prioritization of economic development, community development, and community planning needs for communities, counties, and regions within the State of Alabama. For this purpose the state is divided into eight economic development regions for which assessment reports covering more than 25 metrics have been prepared and presented. The eight economic development regions are:

Region

Counties in Region

Region 1 - Colbert, Cullman, DeKalb, Franklin, Jackson, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Morgan, Winston
Region 2 - Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, Tuscaloosa
Region 3 - Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, Walker
Region 4 - Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Etowah, Randolph, Talladega, Tallapoosa
Region 5 - Autauga, Bullock, Butler, Crenshaw, Elmore, Lee, Lowndes, Macon, Montgomery, Pike, Russell
Region 6 - Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Dallas, Marengo, Monroe, Perry, Sumter, Washington, Wilcox
Region 7 - Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Dale, Geneva, Henry, Houston
Region 8 - Baldwin, Escambia, Mobile

The report first presents a preliminary benchmarking of the state and eight economic development regions with some selected metrics, followed by the authors' conclusions from the regional assessments and SRSP Phase II meeting outcomes. Also included are preliminary benchmark tables for each region using the assessment metrics with some region-nation and region-state comparisons. The attached compact disc (CD) contains Microsoft Excel files with detailed data at the county level and aggregations to the eight economic development regions and 12 regional council areas, the preliminary benchmark summary, and charts.

There are also Microsoft Word files of the assessment reports and the Microsoft PowerPoint files used to present the assessments.

Acknowledgments

The completion of this project in the short time frame was due to the timely contributions of several people. We are grateful to the Executive Directors and staff of the twelve regional councils, the stakeholders, facilitators and other participants who made the SRSP Phase II successful. Special gratitude is owed to Messrs. Larry Watts and Toby Bennington of RPCGB and Mr. Wayne Burnett of AARC for guidance and support. Mrs. Sherry Lang, CBER's graphic designer, designed the report covers, produced the CDs, and essentially put this entire report together. The report provides valuable input for planning and decision making in Alabama.

Preliminary Benchmarks with Selected Metrics

From 1990 to 2000, Alabama had increases in economic output per Alabama employee in 1996 dollars, average wage, and per capita income (Table 1). However, all three economic measures fell when compared to the national averages. This deterioration can be only partially attributed to slower population growth in the state over the period. On the plus side, although child poverty and educational attainment in Alabama are still not at the national averages, they showed better improvements.

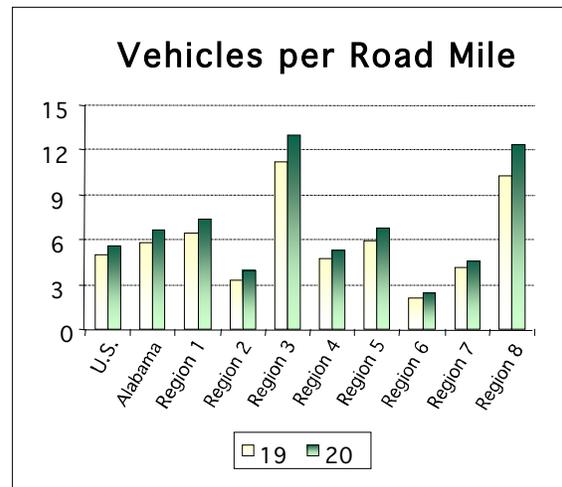
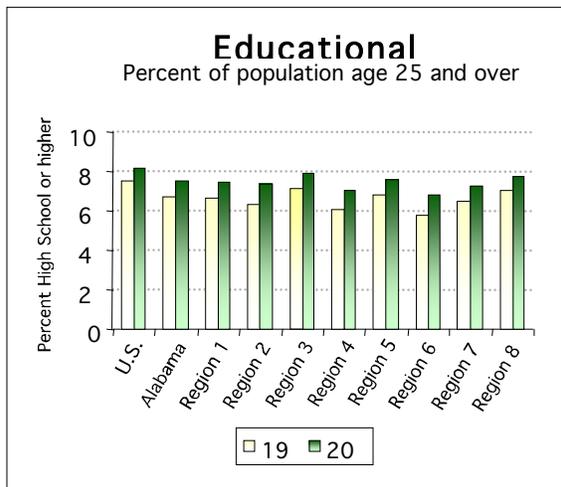
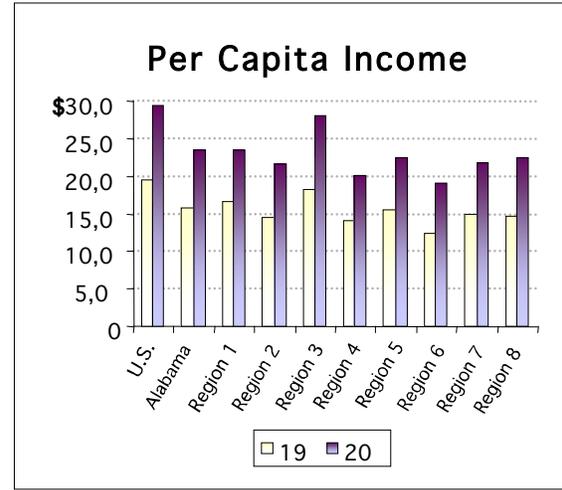
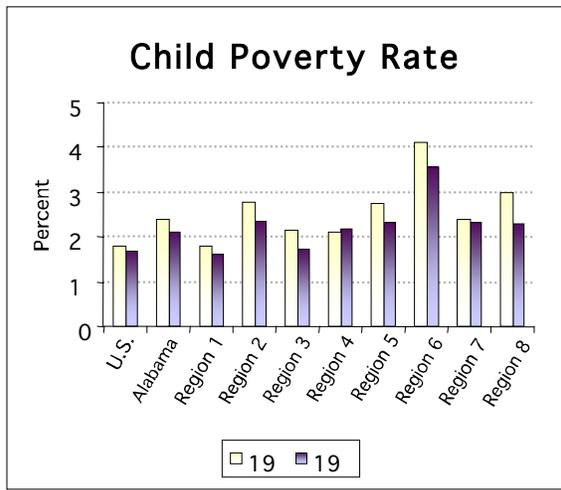
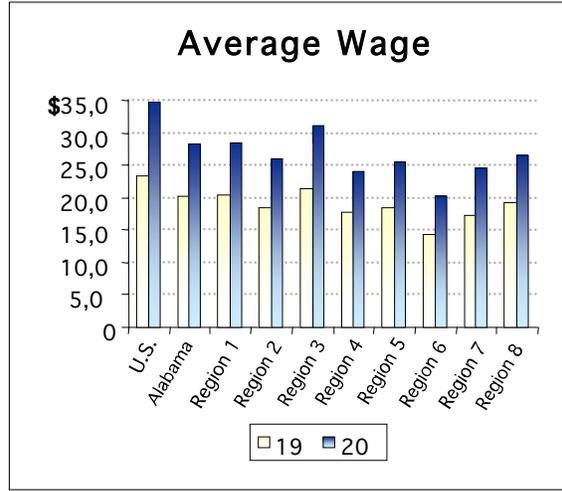
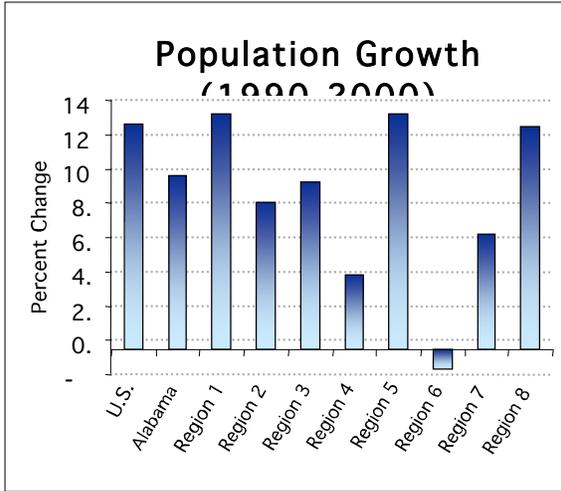
The number of vehicles per road mile increased to 119 percent of the nation's in 2000 from 117 percent in 1992. The number of vehicles per road mile can hint at the level of economic activity, traffic congestion, and insufficiency or lack of public transportation in an area, but it can hide geographical differences when presented as in Table 1. Alabama has pockets with high levels of economic activity and congestion and large expanses with very low levels of economic activity where both public and private transportation are lacking for many.

Table 1. Alabama - United States Comparison

	<u>Output per employee</u> <u>(1996 \$)</u>		<u>Population Growth</u>	<u>Average Wage (\$)</u>		<u>Per Capita Income (\$)</u>	
	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1990-2000 % Change</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
United States	48,180	56,078	13.2	23,322	34,652	19,572	29,469
Alabama	40,407	46,100	10.1	20,107	28,280	15,826	23,521
Percent of U.S.	84%	82%	76%	86%	82%	81%	80%

	<u>Child Poverty Rate (%)</u>		<u>Educational Attainment</u> <u>(HS+,%)</u>		<u>Vehicles per Road Mile</u>	
	<u>1989</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>2000</u>
United States	17.9	17.0	75.2	81.6	50	56
Alabama	24.1	21.2	66.9	75.3	59	67
Percent of U.S.	135%	125%	89%	92%	117%	119%

Preliminary Benchmarking – Selected Metrics



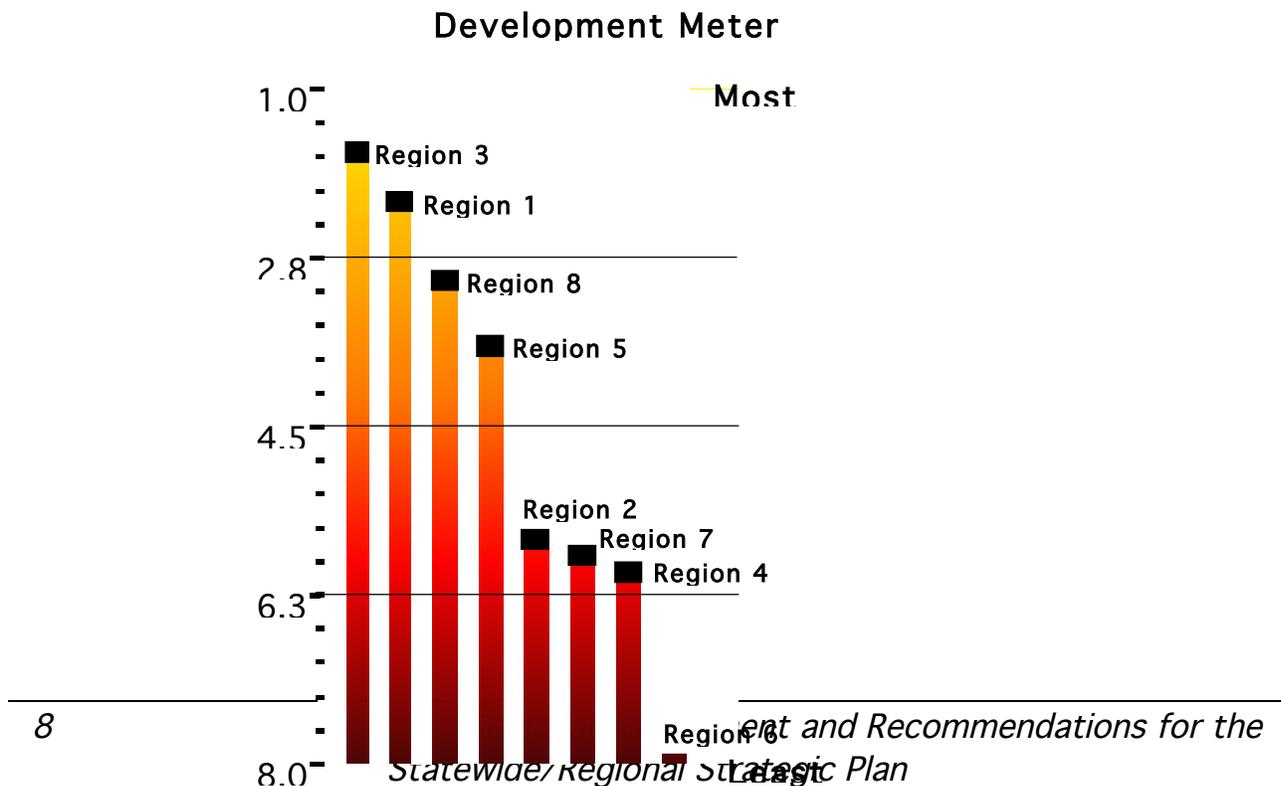
Ranking the Regions with Selected Metrics

The eight economic development regions are ranked using the metrics in Table 1 except output per employee because of disclosure issues with small geographical areas (Table 2). The ranking is 1 for highest and 8 for lowest and the average ranking gives equal weight to each of the six metrics. Clearly, regions 3 and 1 are engines of economic development in the state and region 5 is not too far behind. Region 8 has the most need for development, followed by regions 4, 7, and 2 in that order. These rankings notwithstanding, certain areas within the highly ranked regions may merit focus because geographical disparities.

Table 2. Regional Rankings

Metric	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Region 7	Region 8
Population Growth	1	5	4	7	2	8	6	3
Average Wage (\$)	2	4	1	7	5	8	6	3
Per Capita Income (\$)	2	6	1	7	3	8	5	4
Child Poverty Rate (%)	1	7	2	3	5	8	6	4
Educational Attainment (HS+,%)	4	5	1	7	3	8	6	2
Vehicles per Road Mile	3	7	1	5	4	8	6	2
Average Ranking	2.2	5.7	1.7	6.0	3.7	8.0	5.8	3.0

Note: These rankings are based on year 2000 data for all the metrics except child poverty, which uses 1999 data.



Region 1
**(Colbert, Cullman, DeKalb, Franklin, Jackson, Lauderdale, Lawrence
Limestone, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Morgan, Winston)**

Conclusions

Major issues for this region include transportation, expansion of industrial park inventory, workforce development, water and sewer infrastructure, regional economic development, and education.

- Expand industrial park inventory by increasing number and geographical dispersion as well as completing and enhancing existing sites.
- Two major transportation projects for the region are development of HWY 43 as an interstate quality north-south highway and completion of the Memphis to Atlanta highway. Other priority transportation projects include:
 - AL 157, AL 133, US 43 upgrades
 - US 72 from Shoals thru Athens to Huntsville. Significant upgrade.
 - Interstate connector from Scottsboro along AL 35 to I-59
 - Completion of Corridor V and connect Haleyville to Corridor X
- Strengthen and expand ongoing workforce development efforts. A special focus should be on displaced worker training. Reducing public school dropout rates and investing in expansion of technical training at the secondary school level can secure future labor force.
- Develop and exploit tourism assets more fully (e.g. Tennessee River, Bankhead National Forest, and Bear Creek).
- Address water and sewer issues for growth, especially water quality and availability.

Relevant outcome measures for the region are:

Gross Regional Product	Road and Highway Mileage
Average Wage	Number of New Businesses
Per Capita Income	Travel Related Employment
Poverty Rate	Unemployment Rate
Employment	

Preliminary Benchmarking for Region 1

Metric	US		AL			Region 1			
	1990	2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	Compare AL, 2000
Population	248,709,873	281,421,906	4,040,587	4,447,100	1.6%	876,519	996,565	0.35%	22%
Growth rate (1990-2000)		13.2%		10.1%	76%		13.7%	104%	136%
Per Capita Income (\$)	19,572	29,469	15,826	23,521	80%	16,537.1	23,537.3	80%	100%
Poverty rate (%)	13.1	12.5	17.7	16.1	129%	13.5	12.9	103%	80%
Child poverty rate (%)	17.9	17.0	24.1	21.2	125%	17.9	16.3	96%	77%
Housing, # of units	102,263,678	115,904,641	1,670,379	1,963,711	1.7%	363,199	439,436	0.38%	22%
Owner-occupied units	59,024,811	69,815,723	1,061,897	1,258,705	1.8%	242,935	294,420	0.42%	23%
Units older than 31 years	41.4%	49.5%	32.5%	39.4%	80%	26.9%	36.5%	74%	93%
Telephone penetration		97.0%		95.8%	99%		95.8%	99%	100%
Labor Force	125,857,000	140,872,000	1,889,317	2,154,217	1.5%	436,974	499,018	0.35%	23%
Unemployment Rate	5.6%	4.0%	6.9%	5.3%	132%	7.2%	4.4%	110%	84%
Employment (Total, FT and PT)	139,426,900	167,465,300	2,061,914	2,429,263	1.5%	482,246	570,432	0.34%	23%
Manufacturing	19,697,200	19,106,900	396,410	370,452	1.9%	123,032	120,248	0.63%	32%
Services	38,709,600	53,276,700	454,604	637,329	1.2%	95,693	137,202	0.26%	22%
Average Wage (\$)	23,322	34,652	20,107	28,280	82%	20,502	28,496	82%	101%
Gross Output (Billions, 1996 \$)	6,717.6	9,391.1	83.3	112.0	1.2%	11.3	14.3	0.15%	13%
Output per employee (1996 \$)	48,180	56,078	40,407	46,100	82%	23,434	25,082	45%	54%
State & County Road Mileage	3,901,081	3,917,243	69,532	69,466	1.8%	15,241	15,278	0.39%	22%
Law Enforcement Employment				9,459			1,759		19%
Crime				179,171			29,422		16%
Crime per Officer				19			17		88%
Educational Attainment (HS+, %)	75.2%	81.6%	66.9%	75.3%	92%	66.3%	74.6%	91%	99%
HS+ (High school or higher)	119,524,718	144,869,342	1,702,331	2,173,319	1.5%	375,784	493,430	0.34%	23%
HS+, less bachelor's or higher	87,214,465	100,377,044	1,303,103	1,623,711	1.6%	284,187	366,622	0.37%	23%
Public School Enrollment	41,217,000	46,857,321	713,011	730,092	1.6%	152,403	163,889	0.35%	22%

Public School Dropout Rate (%)	4.8	12.6	263%	1.9-27.4	40-571%	15-217%
Vital Statistics, birth rate	14.7	14.2	97%	13.3	91%	94%
Death rate	8.7	10.1	116%	9.7	111%	96%
Low weight births (%)	7.6	9.7	128%	8.7	115%	90%
Births to unmarried mothers (%)	33.2	34.3	103%	27.0	81%	79%
Medicaid benefit payment per eligible	3,736	3,510	94%	3,405	91%	97%
	39,579,00					
Medicare Enrollment	0	685,821	1.7%	152,873	0.39%	22%
Physicians per 10,000 people	29	41	140%	31	109%	77%
Registered Nurses per 10,000 people	96	95	99%	87	91%	91%
Dentists per 10,000 people	5.3	4.3	82%	4.0	76%	93%
Hospital Beds per 1,000 people	3.5	4.5	126%	3.8	106%	84%
Nursing Home Beds	56	44	78%	46	82%	105%
Pollutant standards index				78.7/21.3		/0.0

Notes: Poverty data are for 1989 and 1999, not 1990 and 2000. Gross output and output per employee for the regions are lower than actual due to county level disclosure issues, since regional data are aggregations of county data. State and county road mileage is for 1992 and 2000 (1999 for U.S.). Law enforcement and crime are for 2001. Educational attainment is on percent of population age 25 and over. Birth and death rates are per 1,000 people. U.S. Medicaid payment per eligible is for 1999. The number of medical professionals is per 10,000 people and year 2002 data are reported for Alabama and the regions (year 2000 for the United States). Nursing home beds are per 1,000 of people age 65 and over and year 2001 data for Alabama and the regions are reported. U.S. data on nursing home and hospital beds are for 1999. The pollutant standard index gives the percent of days when air quality was good/moderate/unhealthful in that order.

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama.

Region 2 (Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, Tuscaloosa)

Conclusions

Major issues for this region include workforce development, regional economic development, transportation, water and sewer infrastructure, and telecommunications.

Workforce development is necessary to prepare the existing labor force for opportunities arising from pressure from the automotive industry expansions and new investments in the region. Providing additional high-tech jobs is a very high priority for the region. A stronger link between industry and the educational/training institutions (including K-12) needs to be developed, to promote career paths that are more relevant to existing and future industries.

Priority Projects:

- Planning grant and formal creation of “West Alabama Consortium of Workforce Development Partners”
- Regional assessment of worker transportation and family care needs
- Financial and political support for career tech education
- In addition, the region must engender a high tech/higher education environment with resources to become a center for research and development, and entrepreneurship.
- Expand industrial park inventory, and specifically provide natural gas connection at Crossroads of the Americas industrial park. An umbrella regional economic development organization is needed to ensure a more even geographic distribution of industrial parks and recruiting efforts.
- The major priority transportation projects are the completion of HWY 43 and an interstate quality north-south highway.
- Sewer infrastructure needs to be expanded and improved in several areas due to population and new business growth. Water quality and availability needs to be managed for long-term sustainability.

- Broadband telecommunications is currently available in pockets of the region. Expanding broadband to all areas is crucial for both workforce and economic development.

Relevant outcome measures for the region are:

Gross Regional Product

Average Wage

Per Capita Income

Poverty Rate

Employment

Road and Highway Mileage

Unemployment Rate

Manufacturing Industry Activity

Preliminary Benchmarking for Region 2

Metric	US		AL			Region 2			
	1990	2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	Compare AL, 2000
Population	248,709,873	281,421,906	4,040,587	4,447,100	1.6%	247,125	268,208	0.10%	6%
Growth rate (1990-2000)		13.2%		10.1%	76%		8.5%	65%	85%
Per Capita Income (\$)	19,572	29,469	15,826	23,521	80%	14,435	21,522	73%	91%
Poverty rate (%)	13.1	12.5	17.7	16.1	129%	20.5	18.4	147%	114%
Child poverty rate (%)	17.9	17.0	24.1	21.2	125%	27.9	23.5	138%	111%
Housing, # of units	102,263,678	115,904,641	1,670,379	1,963,711	1.7%	98,227	118,156	0.10%	6%
Owner-occupied units	59,024,811	69,815,723	1,061,897	1,258,705	1.8%	60,921	72,195	0.10%	6%
Units older than 31 years	41.4%	49.5%	32.5%	39.4%	80%	30.8%	35.8%	72%	91%
Telephone penetration		97.0%		95.8%	99%		95.3%	98%	100%
Labor Force	125,857,000	140,872,000	1,889,317	2,154,217	1.5%	111,130	125,061	0.09%	6%
Unemployment Rate	5.6%	4.0%	6.9%	5.3%	132%	6.3%	4.7%	117%	88%
Employment (Total, FT and PT)	139,426,900	167,465,300	2,061,914	2,429,263	1.5%	113,153	132,755	0.08%	5%
Manufacturing	19,697,200	19,106,900	396,410	370,452	1.9%	21,551	19,828	0.10%	5%
Services	38,709,600	53,276,700	454,604	637,329	1.2%	20,925	27,703	0.05%	4%
Average Wage (\$)	23,322	34,652	20,107	28,280	82%	18,521	26,042	75%	92%
Gross Output (Billions, 1996 \$)	6,717.6	9,391.1	83.3	112.0	1.2%	2.6	3.3	0.04%	3%
Output per employee (1996 \$)	48,180	56,078	40,407	46,100	82%	23,105	24,773	44%	54%
State & County Road Mileage	3,901,081	3,917,243	69,532	69,466	1.8%	6,995	6,947	0.18%	10%
Law Enforcement Employment				9,459			578		6%
Crime				179,171			10,871		6%
Crime per Officer				19			19		99%
Educational Attainment (HS+, %)	75.2%	81.6%	66.9%	75.3%	92%	63.5%	73.6%	90%	98%
HS+ (High school or higher)	119,524,718	144,869,342	1,702,331	2,173,319	1.5%	94,610	122,285	0.08%	6%
HS+, less bachelor's or higher	87,214,465	100,377,044	1,303,103	1,623,711	1.6%	72,427	92,691	0.09%	6%
Public School Enrollment	41,217,000	46,857,321	713,011	730,092	1.6%	44,302	43,444	0.09%	6%

Public School Dropout Rate (%)	4.8	12.6	263%	12.0-25.0	250-521%	95-198%
Vital Statistics, birth rate	14.7	14.2	97%	14.0	95%	99%
Death rate	8.7	10.1	116%	10.1	116%	100%
Low weight births (%)	7.6	9.7	128%	10.5	138%	108%
Births to unmarried mothers (%)	33.2	34.3	103%	38.0	115%	111%
Medicaid benefit payment per eligible	3,736	3,510	94%	4,076	109%	116%
	39,579,00					
Medicare Enrollment	0	685,821	1.7%	40,663	0.10%	6%
Physicians per 10,000 people	29	41	140%	37	127%	90%
Registered Nurses per 10,000 people	96	95	99%	101	106%	107%
Dentists per 10,000 people	5.3	4.3	82%	3.5	66%	81%
Hospital Beds per 1,000 people	3.5	4.5	126%	3.8	108%	86%
Nursing Home Beds	56	44	78%	48	86%	111%
Pollutant standards index				86.0/14.0		/0.0

Notes: Poverty data are for 1989 and 1999, not 1990 and 2000. Gross output and output per employee for the regions are lower than actual due to county level disclosure issues, since regional data are aggregations of county data. State and county road mileage is for 1992 and 2000 (1999 for U.S.). Law enforcement and crime are for 2001. Educational attainment is on percent of population age 25 and over. Birth and death rates are per 1,000 people. U.S. Medicaid payment per eligible is for 1999. The number of medical professionals is per 10,000 people and year 2002 data are reported for Alabama and the regions (year 2000 for the United States). Nursing home beds are per 1,000 of people age 65 and over and year 2001 data for Alabama and the regions are reported. U.S. data on nursing home and hospital beds are for 1999. The pollutant standard index gives the percent of days when air quality was good/moderate/unhealthful in that order.

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama.

Region 3
(Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, Walker)

Conclusions

Major issues for this region focus on land use planning, economic development, infrastructure, environmental concerns, higher use and development of recreational assets, historic preservation, and education. The region must understand the importance of its role as a catalyst for growth of Central Alabama, in particular, and the State in general.

- As the growth engine for the State of Alabama, the Birmingham area suffers from lack of implementation of transportation plans, which has resulted in limited ingress and egress and high traffic congestion, especially during peak commute hours.
- Priority projects for transportation are:
 - Corridor X
 - Northern Beltline
 - 4-lane Highway 231 (Shelby, St. Clair, Blount counties)
 - North-south connector for Walker County
 - Improving rural road conditions and emergency response timesSerious consideration should be given to constructing alternative mass transportation systems.
- Economic development efforts have successfully broadened beyond manufacturing, to include high paying service sector jobs. However, attention must be paid to strengthening existing industry, increasing the diversity of economic sectors (e.g. tourism, high technology, research and development, commercial/retail), and expanding the geographic distribution to include all counties within the region, emphasizing the underdeveloped areas.
- With Jefferson and Shelby counties constrained with “non-attainment” status, the region must focus manufacturing industry recruitment efforts on the remaining four counties.

Relevant outcome measures for the region are:

Gross Regional Product
Average Wage

Road and Highway Mileage
Number of New Businesses

Per Capita Income
Poverty Rate
Employment

Manufacturing Industry Activity

Preliminary Benchmarking for Region 3

Metric	US		AL			Region 3			
	1990	2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	Compare AL, 2000
Population	248,709,873	281,421,906	4,040,587	4,447,100	1.6%	940,268	1,031,412	0.37%	23%
Growth rate (1990-2000)		13.2%		10.1%	76%		9.7%	74%	96%
Per Capita Income (\$)	19,572	29,469	15,826	23,521	80%	18,289	28,216	96%	120%
Poverty rate (%)	13.1	12.5	17.7	16.1	129%	15.8	13.2	106%	82%
Child poverty rate (%)	17.9	17.0	24.1	21.2	125%	21.5	17.3	102%	82%
Housing, # of units	102,263,678	115,904,641	1,670,379	1,963,711	1.7%	390,780	445,993	0.38%	23%
Owner-occupied units	59,024,811	69,815,723	1,061,897	1,258,705	1.8%	248,018	290,812	0.42%	23%
Units older than 31 years	41.4%	49.5%	32.5%	39.4%	80%	36.9%	43.9%	89%	111%
Telephone penetration		97.0%		95.8%	99%		97.1%	100%	101%
Labor Force	125,857,000	140,872,000	1,889,317	2,154,217	1.5%	447,758	522,258	0.37%	24%
Unemployment Rate	5.6%	4.0%	6.9%	5.3%	132%	5.4%	3.3%	83%	63%
Employment (Total, FT and PT)	139,426,900	167,465,300	2,061,914	2,429,263	1.5%	516,499	621,380	0.37%	26%
Manufacturing	19,697,200	19,106,900	396,410	370,452	1.9%	61,532	57,067	0.30%	15%
Services	38,709,600	53,276,700	454,604	637,329	1.2%	137,943	190,716	0.36%	30%
Average Wage (\$)	23,322	34,652	20,107	28,280	82%	21,480	31,040	90%	110%
Gross Output (Billions, 1996 \$)	6,717.6	9,391.1	83.3	112.0	1.2%	14.4	19.8	0.21%	18%
Output per employee (1996 \$)	48,180	56,078	40,407	46,100	82%	27,892	31,786	57%	69%
State & County Road Mileage	3,901,081	3,917,243	69,532	69,466	1.8%	8,222	8,169	0.21%	12%
Law Enforcement Employment				9,459			2,746		29%
Crime				179,171			43,357		24%
Crime per Officer				19			16		83%
Educational Attainment (HS+, %)	75.2%	81.6%	66.9%	75.3%	92%	71.2%	79.1%	97%	105%
HS+ (High school or higher)	119,524,718	144,869,342	1,702,331	2,173,319	1.5%	433,994	536,848	0.37%	25%
HS+, less bachelor's or higher	87,214,465	100,377,044	1,303,103	1,623,711	1.6%	322,113	380,390	0.38%	23%
Public School Enrollment	41,217,000	46,857,320	713,011	730,092	1.6%	156,422	166,473	0.36%	23%

Public School Dropout Rate (%)	4.8	12.6	263%	3.2-25.8	67-538%	25-204%
Vital Statistics, birth rate	14.7	14.2	97%	14.5	98%	102%
Death rate	8.7	10.1	116%	10.1	116%	100%
Low weight births (%)	7.6	9.7	128%	9.6	126%	99%
Births to unmarried mothers (%)	33.2	34.3	103%	31.3	94%	91%
Medicaid benefit payment per eligible	3,736	3,510	94%	3,326	89%	95%
	39,579,00					
Medicare Enrollment	0	685,821	1.7%	155,296	0.39%	23%
Physicians per 10,000 people	29	41	140%	66	229%	163%
Registered Nurses per 10,000 people	96	95	99%	121	126%	127%
Dentists per 10,000 people	5.3	4.3	82%	6.6	125%	153%
Hospital Beds per 1,000 people	3.5	4.5	126%	5.9	167%	132%
Nursing Home Beds	56	44	78%	41	73%	94%
Pollutant standards index				69.0/30.0		/1.0

Notes: Poverty data are for 1989 and 1999, not 1990 and 2000. Gross output and output per employee for the regions are lower than actual due to county level disclosure issues, since regional data are aggregations of county data. State and county road mileage is for 1992 and 2000 (1999 for U.S.). Law enforcement and crime are for 2001. Educational attainment is on percent of population age 25 and over. Birth and death rates are per 1,000 people. U.S. Medicaid payment per eligible is for 1999. The number of medical professionals is per 10,000 people and year 2002 data are reported for Alabama and the regions (year 2000 for the United States). Nursing home beds are per 1,000 of people age 65 and over and year 2001 data for Alabama and the regions are reported. U.S. data on nursing home and hospital beds are for 1999. The pollutant standard index gives the percent of days when air quality was good/moderate/unhealthful in that order.

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama.

Region 4
(Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa,
Etowah, Randolph, Talladega, Tallapoosa)

Conclusions

Major issues for this region focus on education, economic development, planning, infrastructure, and quality of life. The region has identified a lengthy list of projects and programs for development.

- As a major eastern gateway into the State of Alabama, this region is hampered by a paucity of 4-lane roads and a strong connecting road network to support economic development and recreation and tourism.
- Regional consensus support the following short-term priority projects:
 - Widening of U.S. Highway 431 between I-20 and I-85
 - Water and sewer infrastructure to the Lake Martin Regional Industrial Park
 - Support infrastructure for the Honda plant expansion (2000 additional jobs)
 - Develop Gulf States Steel property as a regional Brownfield Pilot Project
 - Establish a technology research center at the Fort McClellan site
 - Construct access roads to Fort McClellan and its industrial sites
- Establish a Regional Economic Development Association to facilitate collaboration between the ten counties.
- A higher level of coordination and focus will enhance the existing workforce development training/retraining programs and better utilize the higher education and career technical training resources in the region.
- Health care and broadband telecommunications need to be expanded into rural areas.

Relevant outcome measures for the region are:

Gross Regional Product	Road and Highway Mileage Improved
Average Wage	Number of New Businesses
Per Capita Income	Unemployment Rate
Poverty Rate	Total Assessed Value Of Properties

Employment

Median Household Income

Preliminary Benchmarking for Region 4

Metric	US		AL			Region 4			
	1990	2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	Compare AL, 2000
Population	248,709,873	281,421,906	4,040,587	4,447,100	1.6%	442,152	461,034	0.16%	10%
Growth rate (1990-2000)		13.2%		10.1%	76%		4.3%	32%	42%
Per Capita Income (\$)	19,572	29,469	15,826	23,521	80%	14,122	20,133	68%	86%
Poverty rate (%)	13.1	12.5	17.7	16.1	129%	16.1	15.9	127%	99%
Child poverty rate (%)	17.9	17.0	24.1	21.2	125%	21.3	21.9	129%	103%
Housing, # of units	102,263,678	115,904,641	1,670,379	1,963,711	1.7%	190,215	211,769	0.18%	11%
Owner-occupied units	59,024,811	69,815,723	1,061,897	1,258,705	1.8%	123,174	138,625	0.20%	11%
Units older than 31 years	41.4%	49.5%	32.5%	39.4%	80%	40.1%	45.0%	91%	114%
Telephone penetration		97.0%		95.8%	99%		94.9%	98%	99%
Labor Force	125,857,000	140,872,000	1,889,317	2,154,217	1.5%	203,319	211,455	0.15%	10%
Unemployment Rate	5.6%	4.0%	6.9%	5.3%	132%	8.5%	5.6%	139%	105%
Employment (Total, FT and PT)	139,426,900	167,465,300	2,061,914	2,429,263	1.5%	200,883	214,090	0.13%	9%
Manufacturing	19,697,200	19,106,900	396,410	370,452	1.9%	56,668	49,143	0.26%	13%
Services	38,709,600	53,276,700	454,604	637,329	1.2%	35,068	50,194	0.09%	8%
Average Wage (\$)	23,322	34,652	20,107	28,280	82%	17,829	24,135	70%	85%
Gross Output (Billions, 1996 \$)	6,717.6	9,391.1	83.3	112.0	1.2%	4.4	4.8	0.05%	4%
Output per employee (1996 \$)	48,180	56,078	40,407	46,100	82%	22,042	22,251	40%	48%
State & County Road Mileage	3,901,081	3,917,243	69,532	69,466	1.8%	9,898	9,868	0.25%	14%
Law Enforcement Employment				9,459			896		9%
Crime				179,171			17,875		10%
Crime per Officer				19			20		105%
Educational Attainment (HS+, %)	75.2%	81.6%	66.9%	75.3%	92%	60.9%	70.1%	86%	93%
HS+ (High school or higher)	119,524,718	144,869,342	1,702,331	2,173,319	1.5%	172,219	216,669	0.15%	10%
HS+, less bachelor's or higher	87,214,465	100,377,044	1,303,103	1,623,711	1.6%	142,086	178,310	0.18%	11%
Public School Enrollment	41,217,000	46,857,320	713,011	730,092	1.6%	76,517	71,643	0.15%	10%

Public School Dropout Rate (%)	4.8	12.6	263%	5.2-36.0	108-750%	41-285%
Vital Statistics, birth rate	14.7	14.2	97%	13.4	91%	94%
Death rate	8.7	10.1	116%	12.0	138%	119%
Low weight births (%)	7.6	9.7	128%	9.7	127%	100%
Births to unmarried mothers (%)	33.2	34.3	103%	33.1	100%	96%
Medicaid benefit payment per eligible	3,736	3,510	94%	3,353	90%	96%
	39,579,00					
Medicare Enrollment	0	685,821	1.7%	82,840	0.21%	12%
Physicians per 10,000 people	29	41	140%	27	93%	66%
Registered Nurses per 10,000 people	96	95	99%	83	87%	88%
Dentists per 10,000 people	5.3	4.3	82%	3.0	57%	70%
Hospital Beds per 1,000 people	3.5	4.5	126%	4.4	125%	99%
Nursing Home Beds	56	44	78%	50	88%	114%
Pollutant standards index				84.3/15.7		/0.0

Notes: Poverty data are for 1989 and 1999, not 1990 and 2000. Gross output and output per employee for the regions are lower than actual due to county level disclosure issues, since regional data are aggregations of county data. State and county road mileage is for 1992 and 2000 (1999 for U.S.). Law enforcement and crime are for 2001. Educational attainment is on percent of population age 25 and over. Birth and death rates are per 1,000 people. U.S. Medicaid payment per eligible is for 1999. The number of medical professionals is per 10,000 people and year 2002 data are reported for Alabama and the regions (year 2000 for the United States). Nursing home beds are per 1,000 of people age 65 and over and year 2001 data for Alabama and the regions are reported. U.S. data on nursing home and hospital beds are for 1999. The pollutant standard index gives the percent of days when air quality was good/moderate/unhealthful in that order.

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama.

Region 5
(Autauga, Bullock, Butler, Crenshaw, Elmore, Lee,
Lowndes, Macon, Montgomery, Pike, Russell)

Conclusions

Major issues for this region are workforce development, infrastructure, tourism, land use planning, and economic development.

- Develop a regional mechanism that serves as a liaison between business/industry and school systems. Establish a package of recognized core industrial/manufacturing skill standards for potential workers to become more trainable employees, utilizing two year colleges, public schools, faith based organizations, and four year schools as trainers.
- Montgomery and Lee counties have historically received the majority of infrastructure and business investment, identifying a strong need for such investments to be made throughout the region. Infrastructure projects include:
 - Industrial sites with water and sewer along I-65, I-85 North, and Hwy 80
 - Improve water and wastewater systems, especially in rural areas
 - I-85 extension to Selma
 - Improvements to Highways 31, 110, 231, 331, and 431
 - Complete 4-laning of 280
 - Construct Montgomery outer loop and Hwy 80 by-pass
- There is consensus for a regional leadership group that would act as a “think tank” to direct capacity building and examine issues and strategies for growth.
- This region has identified tourism as a stimulant to growth of its economy. Efforts must be focused on devising a strategy that exploits existing tourist, recreational, and cultural assets as well as building recognition for the region as a tourism destination.

Relevant outcome measures for the region are:

Gross Regional Product	Road and Highway Mileage
Average Wage	Manufacturing Industry Activity
Per Capita Income	Travel Related Employment

Poverty Rate
Employment

Preliminary Benchmarking for Region 5

Metric	US		AL			Region 5			
	1990	2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	Compare AL, 2000
Population	248,709,873	281,421,906	4,040,587	4,447,100	1.6%	538,273	611,864	0.22%	14%
Growth rate (1990-2000)		13.2%		10.1%	76%		13.7%	104%	136%
Per Capita Income (\$)	19,572	29,469	15,826	23,521	80%	15,518	22,497	76%	96%
Poverty rate (%)	13.1	12.5	17.7	16.1	129%	19.5	18.2	146%	113%
Child poverty rate (%)	17.9	17.0	24.1	21.2	125%	27.3	23.2	136%	109%
Housing, # of units	102,263,678	115,904,641	1,670,379	1,963,711	1.7%	218,280	263,729	0.23%	13%
Owner-occupied units	59,024,811	69,815,723	1,061,897	1,258,705	1.8%	129,633	159,059	0.23%	13%
Units older than 31 years	41.4%	49.5%	32.5%	39.4%	80%	30.2%	36.0%	73%	92%
Telephone penetration		97.0%		95.8%	99%		96.0%	99%	100%
Labor Force	125,857,000	140,872,000	1,889,317	2,154,217	1.5%	248,758	285,469	0.20%	13%
Unemployment Rate	5.6%	4.0%	6.9%	5.3%	132%	7.1%	4.4%	110%	83%
Employment (Total, FT and PT)	139,426,900	167,465,300	2,061,914	2,429,263	1.5%	273,479	327,553	0.20%	13%
Manufacturing	19,697,200	19,106,900	396,410	370,452	1.9%	40,185	37,093	0.19%	10%
Services	38,709,600	53,276,700	454,604	637,329	1.2%	61,952	86,500	0.16%	14%
Average Wage (\$)	23,322	34,652	20,107	28,280	82%	18,489	25,509	74%	90%
Gross Output (Billions, 1996 \$)	6,717.6	9,391.1	83.3	112.0	1.2%	6.2	8.0	0.09%	7%
Output per employee (1996 \$)	48,180	56,078	40,407	46,100	82%	22,731	24,464	44%	53%
State & County Road Mileage	3,901,081	3,917,243	69,532	69,466	1.8%	8,793	8,780	0.22%	13%
Law Enforcement Employment				9,459			1,332		14%
Crime				179,171			32,258		18%
Crime per Officer				19			24		128%
Educational Attainment (HS+, %)	75.2%	81.6%	66.9%	75.3%	92%	68.2%	76.3%	93%	101%
HS+ (High school or higher)	119,524,718	144,869,342	1,702,331	2,173,319	1.5%	219,052	287,353	0.20%	13%
HS+, less bachelor's or higher	87,214,465	100,377,044	1,303,103	1,623,711	1.6%	159,200	204,613	0.20%	13%
Public School Enrollment	41,217,000	46,857,321	713,011	730,092	1.6%	94,030	99,486	0.21%	14%

Public School Dropout Rate (%)	4.8	12.6	263%	3.5-34.6	73-721%	28-274%
Vital Statistics, birth rate	14.7	14.2	97%	14.6	99%	103%
Death rate	8.7	10.1	116%	9.1	105%	90%
Low weight births (%)	7.6	9.7	128%	9.8	129%	101%
Births to unmarried mothers (%)	33.2	34.3	103%	40.1	121%	117%
Medicaid benefit payment per eligible	3,736	3,510	94%	2,810	75%	80%
	39,579,00					
Medicare Enrollment	0	685,821	1.7%	83,395	0.21%	12%
Physicians per 10,000 people	29	41	140%	32	111%	79%
Registered Nurses per 10,000 people	96	95	99%	80	84%	84%
Dentists per 10,000 people	5.3	4.3	82%	3.4	64%	79%
Hospital Beds per 1,000 people	3.5	4.5	126%	3.6	102%	81%
Nursing Home Beds	56	44	78%	47	84%	108%
Pollutant standards index				75.8/24.3		/0.2

Notes: Poverty data are for 1989 and 1999, not 1990 and 2000. Gross output and output per employee for the regions are lower than actual due to county level disclosure issues, since regional data are aggregations of county data. State and county road mileage is for 1992 and 2000 (1999 for U.S.). Law enforcement and crime are for 2001. Educational attainment is on percent of population age 25 and over. Birth and death rates are per 1,000 people. U.S. Medicaid payment per eligible is for 1999. The number of medical professionals is per 10,000 people and year 2002 data are reported for Alabama and the regions (year 2000 for the United States). Nursing home beds are per 1,000 of people age 65 and over and year 2001 data for Alabama and the regions are reported. U.S. data on nursing home and hospital beds are for 1999. The pollutant standard index gives the percent of days when air quality was good/moderate/unhealthful in that order.

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama.

Region 6
(Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Dallas, Marengo,
Monroe, Perry, Sumter, Washington, Wilcox)

Conclusions

Major issues for this region include economic development, infrastructure, education, leadership and quality of life. Cooperation between the counties is essential for regional development. The following activities have been identified for the region's development:

- Establish a Regional Planning Organization to develop a highway, air and water transportation plan for the region. Highway plan must include main North/South and East/West corridors and improve branch highways in entire region: US 43, US 84, I85/US 80, AL 5, AL17, AL 10, AL 21.
- Develop a comprehensive regional economic development program with a steering committee (CED Team) comprised of representatives from each county and coordinated through a designated Alabama-Tombigbee Regional Commission staffperson.
- Expand industrial parks and sites inventory and ensure geographic distribution.
- A Regional Information Center providing information for economic development, management, and tourism and a website linked to state sites. This would market the region as well as assist in the establishment of a regional tourism effort that would inventory tourist and cultural resources, identify funding support, and develop and implement a marketing plan.
- Strengthening cooperation between public and private schools and industry would improve workforce development. Local schools should collaborate to offer career technical programs and training at the High School level and retraining for returning adults.
- Provide regional leadership training opportunities and significantly involve youth in leadership, youth congress and training activities.

- Health care services should cover preventive and primary care as well as being available and accessible to all people in the community. Emergency medical services and insurance for children are two major concerns.

Relevant outcome measures for the region are:

Gross Regional Product
Average Wage
Per Capita Income
Poverty Rate
Employment

Road and Highway Mileage
Number of Health Professionals
Travel Related Employment
Manufacturing Industry Activity
Population

Preliminary Benchmarking for Region 6

Metric	US		AL			Region 6			
	1990	2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	Compare AL, 2000
Population	248,709,873	281,421,906	4,040,587	4,447,100	1.6%	211,689	209,045	0.07%	5%
Growth rate (1990-2000)		13.2%		10.1%	76%		-1.2%	-9%	-12%
Per Capita Income (\$)	19,572	29,469	15,826	23,521	80%	12,275	19,131	65%	81%
Poverty rate (%)	13.1	12.5	17.7	16.1	129%	30.3	27.3	218%	170%
Child poverty rate (%)	17.9	17.0	24.1	21.2	125%	41.2	35.5	209%	167%
Housing, # of units	102,263,678	115,904,641	1,670,379	1,963,711	1.7%	84,767	96,320	0.08%	5%
Owner-occupied units	59,024,811	69,815,723	1,061,897	1,258,705	1.8%	55,290	62,195	0.09%	5%
Units older than 31 years	41.4%	49.5%	32.5%	39.4%	80%	33.3%	38.9%	79%	99%
Telephone penetration		97.0%		95.8%	99%		91.2%	94%	95%
Labor Force	125,857,000	140,872,000	1,889,317	2,154,217	1.5%	84,708	85,207	0.06%	4%
Unemployment Rate	5.6%	4.0%	6.9%	5.3%	132%	10.5%	9.4%	234%	177%
Employment (Total, FT and PT)	139,426,900	167,465,300	2,061,914	2,429,263	1.5%	91,700	94,083	0.06%	4%
Manufacturing	19,697,200	19,106,900	396,410	370,452	1.9%	27,822	24,169	0.13%	7%
Services	38,709,600	53,276,700	454,604	637,329	1.2%	14,780	18,863	0.04%	3%
Average Wage (\$)	23,322	34,652	20,107	28,280	82%	14,442	20,146	58%	71%
Gross Output (Billions, 1996 \$)	6,717.6	9,391.1	83.3	112.0	1.2%	2.0	2.2	0.02%	2%
Output per employee (1996 \$)	48,180	56,078	40,407	46,100	82%	21,823	23,144	41%	50%
State & County Road Mileage	3,901,081	3,917,243	69,532	69,466	1.8%	8,923	8,838	0.23%	13%
Law Enforcement Employment				9,459			345		4%
Crime				179,171			5,420		3%
Crime per Officer				19			16		83%
Educational Attainment (HS+, %)	75.2%	81.6%	66.9%	75.3%	92%	57.3%	68.4%	84%	91%
HS+ (High school or higher)	119,524,718	144,869,342	1,702,331	2,173,319	1.5%	71,923	89,497	0.06%	4%
HS+, less bachelor's or higher	87,214,465	100,377,044	1,303,103	1,623,711	1.6%	58,844	74,382	0.07%	5%
Public School Enrollment	41,217,000	46,857,320	713,011	730,092	1.6%	45,377	39,727	0.08%	5%

Public School Dropout Rate (%)	4.8	12.6	263%	2.1-32.0	44-667%	17-253%
Vital Statistics, birth rate	14.7	14.2	97%	15.7	107%	111%
Death rate	8.7	10.1	116%	11.1	128%	110%
Low weight births (%)	7.6	9.7	128%	12.0	158%	124%
Births to unmarried mothers (%)	33.2	34.3	103%	54.7	165%	159%
Medicaid benefit payment per eligible	3,736	3,510	94%	2,531	68%	72%
	39,579,00					
Medicare Enrollment	0	685,821	1.7%	35,791	0.09%	5%
Physicians per 10,000 people	29	41	140%	18	62%	44%
Registered Nurses per 10,000 people	96	95	99%	63	66%	66%
Dentists per 10,000 people	5.3	4.3	82%	2.4	45%	55%
Hospital Beds per 1,000 people	3.5	4.5	126%	3.9	111%	88%
Nursing Home Beds	56	44	78%	43	76%	97%
Pollutant standards index				86.5/13.5		/0.0

Notes: Poverty data are for 1989 and 1999, not 1990 and 2000. Gross output and output per employee for the regions are lower than actual due to county level disclosure issues, since regional data are aggregations of county data. State and county road mileage is for 1992 and 2000 (1999 for U.S.). Law enforcement and crime are for 2001. Educational attainment is on percent of population age 25 and over. Birth and death rates are per 1,000 people. U.S. Medicaid payment per eligible is for 1999. The number of medical professionals is per 10,000 people and year 2002 data are reported for Alabama and the regions (year 2000 for the United States). Nursing home beds are per 1,000 of people age 65 and over and year 2001 data for Alabama and the regions are reported. U.S. data on nursing home and hospital beds are for 1999. The pollutant standard index gives the percent of days when air quality was good/moderate/unhealthful in that order.

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama.

Region 7
(Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Dale, Geneva, Henry, Houston)

Conclusions

Major issues for this region focus on transportation infrastructure, critical water resource allocation, workforce development, tourism development, and diversification of the agricultural sector, and education.

- Lacking an interstate highway, this region appears isolated from the rest of the state. Significant investment is needed to link this corner to the rest of the state, to Florida and Georgia. Specific transportation projects include:
 - Completely 4-lane U.S. 431; 4-lane Highway 167; 4-lane Highway 52
 - 4-lane Highway 84 to create east-west corridor
 - Create I-10 connector

Investigate and support navigational use of the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flynt Waterway.

- Workforce and human development is essential to ensuring sufficient and appropriate labor for this region. A stronger link between industry and the educational/training institutions needs to be developed, to promote career paths that are more relevant to existing and future industries. Transportation and family services are sorely needed to support the existing labor force.
- Creation of a Regional Water Authority is critical to maintain and enhance water resources and infrastructure.
- Agriculture has been central and remains important to the regional economy but diversification is essential for this sector to remain strong (e.g. alternative agriculture, intensive recruiting of value adding processing plants, and local product branding).
- Tourism has been an underutilized economic development resource. The region should inventory tourist and cultural resources, identify funding support, and develop and implement a marketing plan.

Relevant outcome measures for the region are:

Gross Regional Product
Average Wage

Road and Highway Mileage
Agricultural Output

Per Capita Income
Poverty Rate
Employment

Travel Related Employment
Manufacturing Industry Activity

Preliminary Benchmarking for Region 7

Metric	US		AL			Region 7			
	1990	2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	Compare AL, 2000
Population	248,709,873	281,421,906	4,040,587	4,447,100	1.6%	272,120	290,274	0.10%	7%
Growth rate (1990-2000)		13.2%		10.1%	76%		6.7%	51%	66%
Per Capita Income (\$)	19,572	29,469	15,826	23,521	80%	14,962	21,794	74%	93%
Poverty rate (%)	13.1	12.5	17.7	16.1	129%	16.9	16.7	134%	104%
Child poverty rate (%)	17.9	17.0	24.1	21.2	125%	23.8	23.4	138%	110%
Housing, # of units	102,263,678	115,904,641	1,670,379	1,963,711	1.7%	113,934	132,378	0.11%	7%
Owner-occupied units	59,024,811	69,815,723	1,061,897	1,258,705	1.8%	71,535	82,970	0.12%	7%
Units older than 31 years	41.4%	49.5%	32.5%	39.4%	80%	30.0%	38.3%	77%	97%
Telephone penetration		97.0%		95.8%	99%		94.4%	97%	99%
Labor Force	125,857,000	140,872,000	1,889,317	2,154,217	1.5%	125,587	136,776	0.10%	6%
Unemployment Rate	5.6%	4.0%	6.9%	5.3%	132%	5.7%	5.9%	146%	110%
Employment (Total, FT and PT)	139,426,900	167,465,300	2,061,914	2,429,263	1.5%	144,094	158,248	0.09%	7%
Manufacturing	19,697,200	19,106,900	396,410	370,452	1.9%	32,733	28,207	0.15%	8%
Services	38,709,600	53,276,700	454,604	637,329	1.2%	26,091	35,723	0.07%	6%
Average Wage (\$)	23,322	34,652	20,107	28,280	82%	17,276	24,554	71%	87%
Gross Output (Billions, 1996 \$)	6,717.6	9,391.1	83.3	112.0	1.2%	3.2	3.8	0.04%	3%
Output per employee (1996 \$)	48,180	56,078	40,407	46,100	82%	21,950	23,819	42%	52%
State & County Road Mileage	3,901,081	3,917,243	69,532	69,466	1.8%	6,862	6,789	0.17%	10%
Law Enforcement Employment				9,459			589		6%
Crime				179,171			8,878		5%
Crime per Officer				19			15		80%
Educational Attainment (HS+, %)	75.2%	81.6%	66.9%	75.3%	92%	64.7%	72.4%	89%	96%
HS+ (High school or higher)	119,524,718	144,869,342	1,702,331	2,173,319	1.5%	111,031	139,106	0.10%	6%
HS+, less bachelor's or higher	87,214,465	100,377,044	1,303,103	1,623,711	1.6%	89,183	110,036	0.11%	7%
Public School Enrollment	41,217,000	46,857,321	713,011	730,092	1.6%	50,145	48,928	0.10%	7%

Public School Dropout Rate (%)	4.8	12.6	263%	7.4-28.5	154-594%	59-226%
Vital Statistics, birth rate	14.7	14.2	97%	14.2	97%	100%
Death rate	8.7	10.1	116%	10.6	122%	105%
Low weight births (%)	7.6	9.7	128%	9.6	126%	99%
Births to unmarried mothers (%)	33.2	34.3	103%	34.0	102%	99%
Medicaid benefit payment per eligible	3,736	3,510	94%	3,074	82%	88%
	39,579,00					
Medicare Enrollment	0	685,821	1.7%	47,902	0.12%	7%
Physicians per 10,000 people	29	41	140%	33	114%	81%
Registered Nurses per 10,000 people	96	95	99%	82	85%	86%
Dentists per 10,000 people	5.3	4.3	82%	4.0	75%	92%
Hospital Beds per 1,000 people	3.5	4.5	126%	4.5	127%	101%
Nursing Home Beds	56	44	78%	49	87%	112%
Pollutant standards index				92.0/8.0/0.0		

Notes: Poverty data are for 1989 and 1999, not 1990 and 2000. Gross output and output per employee for the regions are lower than actual due to county level disclosure issues, since regional data are aggregations of county data. State and county road mileage is for 1992 and 2000 (1999 for U.S.). Law enforcement and crime are for 2001. Educational attainment is on percent of population age 25 and over. Birth and death rates are per 1,000 people. U.S. Medicaid payment per eligible is for 1999. The number of medical professionals is per 10,000 people and year 2002 data are reported for Alabama and the regions (year 2000 for the United States). Nursing home beds are per 1,000 of people age 65 and over and year 2001 data for Alabama and the regions are reported. U.S. data on nursing home and hospital beds are for 1999. The pollutant standard index gives the percent of days when air quality was good/moderate/unhealthful in that order.

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama.

Region 8 (Baldwin, Escambia, Mobile)

Conclusions

Major issues for this region focus on infrastructure, workforce development, economic development, tourism development, land use and planning, and education. There is consensus for a regional transportation plan.

- Workforce development is essential to support existing industrial base that includes high tech areas, such as aerospace and aviation technology. The career technical/vocational and high school programs need to be expanded to reflect industry needs with a particular focus on: aviation/aerospace, pre-engineering, and character building.
- Major investments are needed to improve or enhance several airports in the region: Atmore Municipal, Fairhope, Bay Minette, and Gulf Shores airports; and Escambia County Airport road bridge replacement. In addition, implement Port of Mobile intermodal terminal development.
- The region has already assessed its inadequacies with respect to industrial properties/sites and suggests developing industrial sites at the following locations: Atmore, Daphne, Gulf Shores, Orange Beach, Summerdale, and one each in the northern and southern parts of Mobile County.
- Projects to support business and entrepreneurial expansion include:
 - Creation of University of South Alabama Technology Park
 - Initiation of Brookley Field Air Cargo/Aerospace Business Development
 - Development of Maritime/Shipping Training Center
 - Support of Baldwin Technology Council
- The region is interested in inventorying tourist and cultural resources, conducting a tourism economic impact analysis, identifying funding support, and developing and implementing a marketing plan.
- A Regional Water and Sewer Authority should be established to manage resources, assess needs, and plan for long-term growth. Wastewater treatment and sewer lines needs are immediate in Brewton and rural Mobile County.

Relevant outcome measures for the region are:

Gross Regional Product

Average Wage

Per Capita Income

Poverty Rate

Employment

Manufacturing Industry Activity

Agricultural Output

Travel Related Employment

Preliminary Benchmarking for Region 8

Metric	US		AL			Region 8			
	1990	2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	1990	2000	Compare US, 2000	Compare AL, 2000
Population	248,709,873	281,421,906	4,040,587	4,447,100	1.6%	512,441	578,698	0.21%	13%
Growth rate (1990-2000)		13.2%		10.1%	76%		12.9%	98%	129%
Per Capita Income (\$)	19,572	29,469	15,826	23,521	80%	14,770	22,465	76%	96%
Poverty rate (%)	13.1	12.5	17.7	16.1	129%	20.7	16.3	130%	101%
Child poverty rate (%)	17.9	17.0	24.1	21.2	125%	30.0	22.8	134%	108%
Housing, # of units	102,263,678	115,904,641	1,670,379	1,963,711	1.7%	216,509	255,930	0.22%	13%
Owner-occupied units	59,024,811	69,815,723	1,061,897	1,258,705	1.8%	130,391	158,429	0.23%	13%
Units older than 31 years	41.4%	49.5%	32.5%	39.4%	80%	32.6%	37.7%	76%	96%
Telephone penetration		97.0%		95.8%	99%		96.2%	99%	100%
Labor Force	125,857,000	140,872,000	1,889,317	2,154,217	1.5%	230,572	288,993	0.21%	13%
Unemployment Rate	5.6%	4.0%	6.9%	5.3%	132%	6.8%	4.6%	115%	87%
Employment (Total, FT and PT)	139,426,900	167,465,300	2,061,914	2,429,263	1.5%	239,860	310,722	0.19%	13%
Manufacturing	19,697,200	19,106,900	396,410	370,452	1.9%	32,887	30,187	0.16%	8%
Services	38,709,600	53,276,700	454,604	637,329	1.2%	62,152	90,428	0.17%	14%
Average Wage (\$)	23,322	34,652	20,107	28,280	82%	19,141	26,416	76%	93%
Gross Output (Billions, 1996 \$)	6,717.6	9,391.1	83.3	112.0	1.2%	5.7	8.0	0.09%	7%
Output per employee (1996 \$)	48,180	56,078	40,407	46,100	82%	23,958	25,828	46%	56%
State & County Road Mileage	3,901,081	3,917,243	69,532	69,466	1.8%	4,598	4,797	0.12%	7%
Law Enforcement Employment				9,459			1,214		13%
Crime				179,171			31,090		17%
Crime per Officer				19			26		135%
Educational Attainment (HS+, %)	75.2%	81.6%	66.9%	75.3%	92%	70.0%	77.5%	95%	103%
HS+ (High school or higher)	119,524,718	144,869,342	1,702,331	2,173,319	1.5%	223,718	288,131	0.20%	13%
HS+, less bachelor's or higher	87,214,465	100,377,044	1,303,103	1,623,711	1.6%	175,063	216,667	0.22%	13%
Public School Enrollment	41,217,000	46,857,321	713,011	730,092	1.6%	89,506	93,663	0.20%	13%

Public School Dropout Rate (%)	4.8	12.6	263%	9.9-23.6	206-492%	78-187%
Vital Statistics, birth rate	14.7	14.2	97%	15.0	102%	106%
Death rate	8.7	10.1	116%	9.9	114%	98%
Low weight births (%)	7.6	9.7	128%	10.4	137%	107%
Births to unmarried mothers (%)	33.2	34.3	103%	36.1	109%	105%
Medicaid benefit payment per eligible	3,736	3,510	94%	2,918	78%	83%
	39,579,00					
Medicare Enrollment	0	685,821	1.7%	86,840	0.22%	13%
Physicians per 10,000 people	29	41	140%	45	157%	112%
Registered Nurses per 10,000 people	96	95	99%	106	111%	112%
Dentists per 10,000 people	5.3	4.3	82%	4.2	79%	96%
Hospital Beds per 1,000 people	3.5	4.5	126%	4.5	129%	102%
Nursing Home Beds	56	44	78%	39	69%	89%
Pollutant standards index				66.3/33.3		/0.3

Notes: Poverty data are for 1989 and 1999, not 1990 and 2000. Gross output and output per employee for the regions are lower than actual due to county level disclosure issues, since regional data are aggregations of county data. State and county road mileage is for 1992 and 2000 (1999 for U.S.). Law enforcement and crime are for 2001. Educational attainment is on percent of population age 25 and over. Birth and death rates are per 1,000 people. U.S. Medicaid payment per eligible is for 1999. The number of medical professionals is per 10,000 people and year 2002 data are reported for Alabama and the regions (year 2000 for the United States). Nursing home beds are per 1,000 of people age 65 and over and year 2001 data for Alabama and the regions are reported. U.S. data on nursing home and hospital beds are for 1999. The pollutant standard index gives the percent of days when air quality was good/moderate/unhealthful in that order.

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama.